This flask's narrow neck and small mouth indicate that it was probably used for storing and drinking liquid. When filled, there would have been some sort of covering to seal the top. The flask is made from gray stoneware that has been brushed with a white, liquid clay called slip. While the slip was wet, the potter used a sharp tool, perhaps a bamboo stick, to draw an abstract design of leaves and blossoms through the white slip, cutting gently into the body of the clay vessel to reveal its original gray color. The vase was then covered with a thin, translucent glaze, leaving only the sturdy foot of the flask unglazed. The flattened sides, small delicate mouth, and freely expressed floral designs give this pot a sense of exuberance.

Energetic, confident designs and simple, rustic forms are hallmarks of Korean punch'ŏng (poon-chong) ware. Punch'ŏng means "powder green," and probably refers to the hint of green in the clear, outer glaze. Developed from the celadon tradition of the Koryŏ dynasty (918–1392) (see page 10 of the resource book), punch'ŏng ware flourished in Korea from 1400 to 1600, part of a wide variety of wares being made at kilns throughout the peninsula. The great Japanese tea master Sen no Rikyu (1522–1591) especially admired punch'ŏng pots, and lauded them as the best vessels for the Japanese tea ceremony. Late in the 1500s, the Japanese army invaded the Korean peninsula, often taking Korean potters to Japan to advance that country's pottery industry.

Philadelphia Museum of Art. Purchased with the Henry B. Kean Fund and with funds contributed by Mrs. Howard H. Lewis and the Honorable Hugh Scott, 1993-20-1